

# OUTGOING MESSAGE

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FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS FROM INTERAGENCY INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM  
{LEBANON AT THE CROSSROADS, 13 OCT 1975} AND TWO NID ARTICLES  
{DEC 8 AND 9} WHICH SUMMARIZE THE SITUATION IN LEBANON.

## BACKGROUND TO THE CRISIS:

1. THE SPIRALING CYCLE OF VIOLENCE THAT HAS ROCKED LEBANON  
SINCE LAST SPRING HAS THROWN THE COUNTRY'S DELICATE POLITICAL  
SYSTEM SERIOUSLY OUT OF BALANCE AND HAS BROUGHT LEBANON THE NEAREST  
IT HAS BEEN TO NATIONAL COLLAPSE. IF THE NEWLY CONSTITUTED "COMMIT-  
TEE FOR A NATIONAL DIALOGUE" FAILS SOON TO RECONCILE SOME OF THE  
COMPETING DEMANDS OF MUSLIMS AND CHRISTIANS, THE SITUATION IS LIKELY  
TO DISINTEGRATE INTO EVEN MORE WIDESPREAD VIOLENCE. AN ALL-OUT  
CIVIL WAR IS A DISTINCT POSSIBILITY IN AN ARENA WHERE AN INCREASING-  
LY HIGHER PERCENTAGE OF THE POPULATION IS HEAVILY ARMED, AND

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EXTREMIST POLITICIANS ON BOTH SIDES APPEAR BENT ON PURSUING THEIR OWN INTERESTS, EVEN AT THE COST OF FURTHER INFLAMING COMMUNAL PASSIONS. PROLONGED FIGHTING WOULD CARRY A HIGH RISK OF MILITARY INTERVENTION BY SYRIA AND ISRAEL AND THE POSSIBLE DISMEMBERMENT OF LEBANON.

2. THERE IS LITTLE CHANCE THAT LEBANON'S POLITICAL SYSTEM CAN SURVIVE IF IT REMAINS UNALTERED. THE NEED FOR FUNDAMENTAL CHANGES IN THE 1943 NATIONAL COVENANT, WHICH PROVIDES FOR THE DISTRIBUTION OF POLITICAL POSTS ON THE BASIS OF WHAT BY NOW IS THE FICTION OF A CHRISTIAN MAJORITY IN THE COUNTRY, IS THE CENTRAL ISSUE IN THE CRISIS. WHETHER THE COUNTRY DRIFTS INTO CHAOS NOW DEPENDS PRIMARILY ON SOME IMMEDIATE CONCESSIONS BY THE CONSERVATIVE CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP TO THE MODERATE MUSLIMS' REQUIREMENTS FOR GREATER POLITICAL POWER AND A SCALING DOWN OF LEFTIST REFORM PROPOSALS.

3. THE BALANCING OF CONFESSIONAL GROUP INTERESTS AND THE CONTAINMENT OF ALL CONFLICTS BETWEEN MUSLIMS AND CHRISTIANS HAS ALWAYS BEEN THE CENTRAL THEME OF THE LEBANESE POLITICAL PROCESS. LEBANON, WHICH WAS CARVED OUT OF GREATER SYRIA DURING THE FRENCH MANDATE

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FOLLOWING THE FIRST WORLD WAR, EMERGED AS AN INDEPENDENT STATE IN 1943 WITH BUILT-IN TENSION BETWEEN THE MEMBERS OF ITS SEVEN MAJOR RELIGIOUS SECTS. AT ITS INCEPTION, HOWEVER, CHRISTIANS AND MUSLIMS ALIKE ACCEPTED A POWER SHARING PRINCIPLE EMBARACED IN THE SO-CALLED NATIONAL COVENANT OF 1943. MARONITE CHRISTIANS AND SUNNI MUSLIMS, AS THE MOST NUMEROUS GROUPINGS, DOMINATED POLITICAL LIFE AND THE COVENANT APPORTIONED POSITIONS IN THE GOVERNMENT TO THESE AND OTHER SECTS ON THE BASIS OF THEIR NUMBERS IN THE 1932 CENSUS. BECAUSE THAT SENSUS, THE LAST TAKEN IN LEBANON, SHOWED A SLIGHT CHRISTIAN MAJORITY, THE PRESIDENCY WENT TO A MARONITE AND THE PREMIERSHIP TO A SUNNI. THE THIRD LARGEST SECT, THE SHIA MUSLIMS, WERE AWARDED WITH SPEAKERSHIP OF THE SINGLE-CHAMBER PARLIAMENT. (NOTE: THE COVENANT ALSO PROVIDED THAT THERE SHOULD BE A RATION OF SIX CHRISTIANS TO EVERY FIVE NON-CHRISTIANS IN THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES) EACH OF THE OTHER SECTS HAD THEIR DISTINCT AND RECOGNIZED ROLE IN THE CABINET AND THROUGHOUT THE GOVERNMENT.

4. THE SYSTEM WORKED LARGELY BECAUSE LEBANON'S FIRST GENERATION LEADERS FOR THE MOST PART RECOGNIZED THAT ANY ATTEMPT AT FUNDAMENTAL

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CHANGE WOULD THREATEN THE VERY STRUCTURE OF THE STATE. THE POWER-SHARING PRINCIPLE RESULTED IN A MUTUALLY UNDERSTOOD EQUILIBRIUM BETWEEN RELIGIOUS GROUPS; NO SENSIBLE POLITICIAN CONTEMPLATED UPSETTING THE BALANCE BECAUSE IT WOULD ARRAY NEARLY ALL OTHER POLITICAL LEADERS AGAINST HIM. THE PRESIDENT, ELECTED BY THE LEGISLATURE, ENJOYED BROADER AUTHORITY THAN THE PRIME MINISTER, BUT CHRISTIAN PRESIDENTS CONSISTENTLY ADOPTED POLICIES OF CONCILIATION AND COMPROMISE IN ORDER TO AVOID A DECISIVE CONFRONTATION WITH THE MUSLIMS. THIS PRACTICE WAS DISREGARDED IN 1958 WHEN THE INCUMBENT PRESIDENT UNCONSTITUTIONALLY ATTEMPTED TO SERVE ANOTHER TERM OF OFFICE AND THE RESULT WAS SERIOUS MUSLIM-CHRISTIAN FIGHTING. STABILITY RETURNED ONLY WHEN A NEW PRESIDENT WAS ELECTED BY CONSTITUTIONAL MEANS AT THE END OF THE INCUMBENT'S TERM OF OFFICE.

5. THE SYSTEM WORKED FOR A VARIETY OF OTHER REASONS. PARTISAN, OFTEN PETTY, DISPUTES AND QUARRELS WERE A CONSTANT FEATURE OF LEBANESE POLITICS BUT THE VARIOUS TRADITIONAL LEADERS WERE ABLE TO PLAY OFF AGAINST ONE ANOTHER TO AVOID SHOWDOWNS ON MAJOR ISSUES. THE MUSLIMS WERE DIVIDED AND TENDED TO SUPPORT CONTENDING CHRISTIANS

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FACTIONS BECAUSE OF IDEOLOGICAL OR GEOGRAPHIC AFFINITY OR IN THE HOPE OF SHARING THE SPOILS. LEBANON'S FLOURISHING LAISSEZ-FAIRE ECONOMY WAS ABLE TO GENERATE CONSIDERABLE REVENUE FOR A SMALL COUNTRY AND TRADITIONAL TIES OF FAMILY AND RELIGION COMPENSATED FOR THE FAILURE OF THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT TO COPE WITH SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PROBLEMS.

6. LEBANON'S TRADITIONAL CHRISTIAN AND MUSLIM LEADERS, IN FACT, OFTEN APPEARED TO COOPERATE TO RESIST PRESSURE FOR CREATION OF A STRONG CENTRAL GOVERNMENT IN ORDER TO PRESERVE THEIR INDIVIDUAL POWER. THE NATIONAL LEADERS, WHO DERIVE THEIR STRENGTH FROM THEIR DOMINANT POLITICAL POSITIONS IN THEIR RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES, ARE IN EFFECT ALSO LOCAL BOSSES AND CLAN CHIEFTAINS, AND THE DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIAL BENEFITS AND POLITICAL PERQUISITES ARE LARGELY CHanneled THROUGH THEM RATHER THAN THE STATE. THUS, THE ABSENCE OF A STRONG STATE MECHANISM ENSURED THE CONTINUED DOMINANCE OF POWERFUL CHRISTIANS AND MUSLIM BOSSES WHETHER THEY WERE IN OR OUT OF THE CABINET AND THE LEADERS OF THE MAJOR COMMUNITIES DERIVED MUTUAL BENEFIT FROM THE BASIC IMMOBILISM IN THE TRADITIONAL LEBANESE SYSTEM.

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7. A FINAL POINT OPERATING IN FAVOR OF THE TRADITIONAL SYSTEM WAS THAT BOTH CHRISTIAN AND MUSLIM LEADERS TENDED TO VIEW LEBANON AS A UNIQUE STATE WITH A CHARACTER DISTINCT FROM ITS NEIGHBORS IN THE ARAB WORLD. LEBANON'S ELECTIONS HAVE BEEN RELATIVELY FREE, ITS PRESS GENERALLY UNFETTERED, AND, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE 1958 CIVIL WAR, POWER HAS BEEN TRANSFERRED PEACEFULLY FROM ONE ADMINISTRATION TO ANOTHER. ARAB NATIONALISM HAS OBVIOUSLY BEEN A COMPLICATING FACTOR AND, ON THE WHOLE, MUSLIM LEADERS HAVE SUPPORTED THE "PROGRESSIVE" ARAB STATES, BUT NOT AT THE EXPENSE OF LEBANON'S INDEPENDENCE. FOR THEIR PART CHRISTIAN LEADERS HAVE VIEWED LEBANON AS A BRIDGE BETWEEN THE WEST AND THE ARAB EAST.

8. DISPUTE THEIR SHARED PERCEPTIONS OF THE UNIQUENESS OF LEBANON'S EXPERIENCE AND THE NECESSITY FOR CONTINUED COMPROMISE TO PRESERVE ITS DELICATE POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS BALANCE, HOWEVER, LEBANON'S MUSLIM AND CHRISTIAN LEADERS HAVE IN RECENT YEARS BEEN UNABLE TO ARREST A GRADUAL DRIFT INTO POLITICAL CRISIS THE CLEARLY THREATENED THE VIABILITY OF THE TRADITIONAL SYSTEM.

9. THE UNDERPINNING OF THE TRADITIONAL SYSTEM WAS THE

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WILLINGNESS OF KEY ELEMENTS IN LEBANESE SOCIETY TO ACCEPT THE  
STATUS QUO. OVER THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS, HOWEVER, THE MUSLIMS AND  
LEFTISTS HAVE SHOWN INCREASED READINESS TO ALTER THE CHRISTIAN  
DOMINANCE IN THE POLITICAL SYSTEM, THE RELUCTANCE OF THE CENTRAL  
GOVERNMENT TO INITIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC REFORMS HAS BEEN MORE  
WIDELY CHALLENGED, AND THE VARIOUS CONTENDING PARTIES HAVE BEEN  
MORE DISPOSED TO RESORT TO VIOLENCE RATHER THAN TRADITIONAL FORMS  
OF POWER BROKERING.

10. THE BASIC CAUSE OF THIS DISCONTENT IS THAT SINCE 1943  
THE MUSLIM POPULATION HAS GROWN AT A FASTER RATE THAN THE CHRISTIAN  
AND IS NOW IN THE MAJORITY. NEVERTHELESS, POLITICAL POWER AND ECON-  
OMIC WEALTH HAVE NOT BEEN REDISTRIBUTED TO REFLECT THE NEW RATION.  
MUSLIM PRESSURE TO ALTER THE POLITICAL STRUCTURE TO REFLECT THEIR  
INCREASED NUMBERS HAS BEEN BUILDING FOR SOME TIME AND HAS BEEN  
FUELED BY A VARIETY OF LEFTIST AGITATORS BENT ON SECURING A RADICAL-  
IZED, MUSLIM-DOMINATED GOVERNMENT FOR LEBANON. THE ISSUE, HOWEVER,  
WAS FINALLY JOINED WITH THE APPOINTMENT OF RASHID KARAMI, A POWERFUL  
SUNNI MUSLIM LEADER FROM TRIPOLI, AS PRIME MINISTER LAST JULY. ■■■

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KARAMI, AN OLD ESTABLISHMENT POLITICIAN, PUBLICALLY ANNOUNCED THAT HE CONSIDERED HIMSELF A CANDIDATE FOR THE PRESIDENCY, AN OBVIOUS ALTERATION IN THE NATIONAL COVENANT. VARIATIONS ON THE THEME OF ALTERING THE COVENANT HAVE BEEN ECHOED BY SHIA MUSLIM LEADER IMAN MUSA BSADR. ALTHOUGH THESE LEADERS VARY IN THE EXTENT TO WHICH THEY WOULD ALTER THE CONSTITUTION, THE IMPORTANCE OF THEIR CHALLENGE IS THAT THEY ARE TRADITIONALIST LEADERS WHO COLLECTIVELY REPRESENT THE POPULAR NON-CHRISTIAN MAJORITY AND WHO APPEAR NO LONGER WILLING OR ABLE TO ACCEPT A COMPROMISE SHORT OF SOME ADJUSTMENTS THAT WOULD AT LEAST GIVE THE MUSLIMS PARITY IN POWER-SHARING WITH THE CHRISTIANS. GIVEN THE DEMOGRAPHIC REALITY IN LEBANON AND THE EXTENT OF MUSLIM DISSATISFACTION, THEIR CHALLENGE CAN NOT BE TURNED BACK.

11. MUSLIM AGITATION FOR INCREASED POLITICAL POWER HAS BEEN FUELED BY GROWING DISCONTENT WITH THE RELUCTANCE OF LEBANON'S TRADITIONAL POLITICIANS TO COME TO GRIPS WITH PRESSING ISSUES OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC REFORM. DEMANDS FOR REFORM CENTER ON AID TO DEPRESSED RURAL AREAS, SUBSIDIZED HOUSING, UNEMPLOYMENT AND WELFARE BENEFITS IMPROVEMENTS IN EDUCATIONAL AND HEALTH FACILITIES, AND CONTROLS ON

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ON BASIC PRICES. SHIA MUSLIMS DISPOSSESSED FROM THE SOUTH BY ISRAELI-PAKESTINIAN FIGHTING ADD ANOTHER SERIOUS PROBLEM TO THE VOLATILE URBAN AREAS.

12. TRADITIONAL FORMS OF DISPENSING MATERIAL BENEFITS ARE NO LONGER ADEQUATE AND IN THE POORER SECTIONS OF BEIRUT AND OTHER CITIES TRADITIONAL TIES ARE WEAKENING AS LEFTISTS GAIN INFLUENCE IN URBAN AREAS. IN 1973 LEBANON BEGAN TO WITNESS A WAVE OF POPULAR UNREST SPURRED BY DRAMATIC INCREASES IN THE COST OF LIVING THAT OVERFLOWED THE BOUNDS OF TRADITIONAL POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS DISTINCTIONS AND INTERESTS. IN THE DEPRESSED SOUTH, WHICH IS INHABITED MOSTLY BY SHIA MUSLIMS, IMAN MUSA SADR MOUNTED AN UNPRECEDENTLY VOCIFEROUS CAMPAIGN FOR GREATER GOVERNMENT SPENDING ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND CALLED ON HIS CO-RELIGIONISTS TO TAKE UP ARMS TO DEFEND THEIR RIGHTS.

13. THEIRAN'S APPEAR TO RESORT TO ARMS WAS LARGELY RHETORIC, BUT IT ILLUSTRATES A THIRD PHENOMENON THAT HAS MADE LEBANON'S LATEST CRISIS MORE DANGEROUS -- THE INCREASED MILITARIZATION OF LEBANESE SOCIETY. ALTHOUGH PRIVATE ARMIES HAVE EXISTED IN LEBANON FOR HUNDREDS OF YEARS, THE PRESENT HIGH DEGREE OF MILITARIZATION CAN

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BE LARGELY ATTRIBUTED TO THE GROWTH OF THE PALESTINIAN FEDAYEEN PRESENCE IN LEBANON FOLLOWING THE 1967 ARAB-ISRAELI WAR. INDEED, MUCH OF THE BREAKDOWN IN LEBANON'S TRADITIONAL SYSTEM CAN BE TRACED TO THE GOVERNMENT'S INABILITY TO COPE EFFECTIVELY WITH THE SECURITY PROBLEM PRESENTED BY THE PRESENCE OF A LARGE NUMBER OF ARMED, UNDISCIPLINED, AND FRUSTRATED FEDAYEEN ORGANIZATIONS COMBINED WITH THE PRESENCE OF SOME 350,000 OTHER PALESTINIANS (SOME ARMED) IN AND NEAR LEBANON'S 15 REFUGEE CAMPS.

4. THE INTRODUCTION OF ARMED FEDAYEEN FACILITATED THE ARMING OF NATIVE LEBANESE LEFTIST AND EXTREMIST GROUPS AND TRIGGERED THE EXPANSION OF THE MILITIA OF THE CHRISTIAN PHAGANGES PARTY, WHICH BECAME THE NUCLEUS OF ANTI-FEDAYEEN FORCES IN LEBANON. THE INCREASED ARMS OF PRIVATE GROUPS, THE GOVERNMENT'S POLITICAL INABILITY TO USE THE MULTI-CONFESSIONAL, POORLY TRAINED AND EQUIPPED ARMY TO EJECT THE FEDAYEEN, AND THE INADEQUACY OF THE LEBANESE SECURITY FORCE TO DEAL WITH CLASHES BETWEEN WARRING GROUPS PRODUCED A SHARP DROP IN PUBLIC RESPECT FOR LAW AND ORDER AND HAS CONTRIBUTED TO THE WIDESPREAD SOCIAL MALAISE WHICH NOW THREATENS THE TRADITIONAL SYSTEM.

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15. A FINAL FACTOR THAT MAKES THE PRESENT CRISIS POTENTIALLY SO MUCH MORE DANGEROUS THAN ANY IN THE PAST IS THAT CONFESSIONAL AND OTHER ANIMOSITY BETWEEN THE VARIOUS GROUPS HAS REACHED SUCH A POINT THAT NEITHER THE GOVERNMENT NOR ANY OF THE TRADITIONAL LEADERS OF THE VARIOUS COMMUNITIES CAN SUSTAIN CONTROL OF THE SITUATION. IN EACH OF THE VIOLENT CONFRONTATIONS SINCE LAST SPRING LEADING TO THE PRESENT CRISIS, IT HAS TAKEN ONLY A MINOR INCIDENT TO SPARK WIDE-SPREAD FIGHTING. MOREOVER, LEADERS LIKE KARANI HAVE BEEN RELUCTANT TO USE THE PREDOMINATELY CHRISTIAN OFFICERED ARMY TO QUELL THIS CIVIL UNREST. OTHERS LIKE JUMBLATT HOPE TO USE FURTHER VIOLENCE TO WRING CONCESSIONS OUT OF THE CHRISTIAN POLITICAL LEADERSHIP. THUS, EVEN THOSE LEADERS WHO HAVE SOME INTEREST IN RESCUING CALM HAVE BEEN WILLING TO TOLERATE VIOLENCE EITHER TO PROTECT THEIR OWN POSITION OR TO CAPITALIZE ON IT IN THE PURSUANCE OF THEIR POLITICAL OBJECTIVES.

CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS: THE CHRISTIAN VIEWPOINT:

LEBANESE LEADERSHIP DISPLAYS SOME WILLINGNESS TO NEGOTIATE:

LEBANON'S PRINCIPAL CHRISTIAN AND MUSLIM POLITICAL LEADERS HAVE

OVER THE PAST TWO WEEKS SHOWN SOME WILLINGNESS TO NEGOTIATE THEIR

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POLITICAL DIFFERENCES. THIS CHANGE OF POSITIONS--ALTHOUGH QUALIFIED AND PROBABLY ONLY TEMPORARY--MAY ALLOW PRIME MINISTER KARAMI TO ENLARGE HIS CABINET TO INCLUDE REPRESENTATIVES OF IMPORTANT GROUPS ACROSS THE POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS SPECTRUM AND SUBSEQUENTLY TO BEGIN CONSIDERATION OF POLITICAL REFORMS.

THE CABINET AND PARLIAMENT WILL RESIST ANY CHANGES THAT WOULD END CHRISTIAN POLITICAL DOMINANCE, BUT THEY MAY AGREE ON MODEST REFORMS TO KEEP THE FIGHTING AT A LOW LEVEL AT LEAST UNTIL THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS NEXT APRIL.

FRANJIYAH'S OUTLOOK:

PRESIDENT FRANJIYAH, AFTER MONTHS OF SILENCE AND POLITICAL PASSIVITY, EXPRESSED ON NOVEMBER 26 A WILLINGNESS TO HAVE THE GOVERNMENT CONSIDER ANY "WELL-STUDIED PLAN" FOR POLITICAL, SOCIAL OR ECONOMIC REFORMS. ON NOVEMBER 29 HE JOINED WITH KARAMI IN APPEARING FOR AN END TO THE FIGHTING IN BEIRUT, AND IN ENDORSING --ALBEIT IN THE MOST GENERAL TERMS -- A GOVERNMENT PROGRAM OF POLITICAL REFORM. BECAUSE FRANJIYAH AND KARAMI ARE THE COUNTRY'S LEADING CHRISTIAN AND MUSLIM POLITICIANS, THEIR RECONCILIATION CREATED HOPE AMONG MANY LEBANESE

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THAT THE FIGHTING COULD AT LEAST TEMPORARILY BE ENDED.

FRANJIYAH SO FAR HAS NOT MENTIONED ANY SPECIFIC REFORM THAT HE WOULD SUPPORT, AND HIS TACTICS SUGGEST THAT HE IS NOT PREPARED TO CHANGE THE ESSENTIALS OF CHRISTIAN POLICY. ABOVE ALL, HE WILL INSIST THAT A CHRISTIAN RETAIN THE PRESIDENCY AND THAT THE STRENGTH OF THE OFFICE NOT BE UNDERCUT BY A FORMAL TRANSFER OF POWERS TO THE PRIME MINISTER. FRANJIYAH MAY, HOWEVER, BE PREPARED TO:

- ALLOW INFORMALLY GREATER PREROGATIVES TO THE PRIME MINISTER.
- EQUALIZE CHRISTIAN AND MUSLIM REPRESENTATION IN PARLIAMENT AND THE CIVIL SERVICE.
- ESTABLISH A JOINT CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM COMMAND OF THE LEBANESE ARMY.

OTHER CHRISTIAN LEADERS:

LEADERS OF THE PHALANGES PARTY, WHICH HAS THE LARGEST CHRISTIAN MILITIA, ARE SHOWING SOME WILLINGNESS TO COMPROMISE. PARTIAL PARTY LEADER PIERRE JUMAYYIL WAS IN DAMASCUS THIS WEEK-END FOR CONSULTATIONS WITH PRESIDENT ASAD, AND PHALANGIST REPRESENTATIVES HAVE FOR THE PAST FEW WEEKS BEEN NEGOTIATING WITH LEADERS OF

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FATAH, THE LARGEST FEDAYEEN GROUP. THE PALESTINIANS AND SEVERAL MEDIATORS ARE OPTIMISTIC THAT THE PHALANGISTS WILL CONSIDER LIMITED ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL REFORM.

JUMAYYIL'S WILLINGNESS TO ENTER NEGOTIATIONS IS PROMPTED BY THE RESTRAINT SHOWN BY THE MAJOR FEDAYEEN GROUPS DURING THE FIGHTING IN LEBANON THIS YEAR. IF THE PALESTINIANS RESPECT THE EXISTING AGREEMENTS OUTLINING THEIR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN LEBANON -- THE CAIRO AGREEMENT OF 1969 AND THE MELKART AGREEMENT OF 1973 -- AND LIMIT THEIR ASSISTANCE TO OR HELP CONTROL THE RADICAL LEBANESE GROUPS, THE PHALANGISTS MAY MAKE CONCESSIONS TO LEBANON'S TRADITIONAL MUSLIM LEADERS.

IF THE MAIN FEDAYEEN GROUPS REVERT TO OBSTRUCTIONIST POLICIES, HOWEVER, OR DEMAND THAT THE CHRISTIANS NEGOTIATE WITH OR MAKE CHANGES THAT WOULD DIRECTLY BENEFIT THE LEBANESE FAR LEFT, THE PHALANGISTS WILL NO LONGER BARGAIN SERIOUSLY.

THE PHALANGISTS, LIKE THE OTHER CHRISTIAN GROUPS, ARE PESSIMISTIC THAT THE PALESTINIANS OR THE MUSLIMS WILL TEMPER THEIR POLITICAL DEMANDS TO ALLOW AGREEMENT ON FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES. PARTY LEADERS,

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NEVERTHELESS, HAVE AN INTEREST IN KEEPING NEGOTIATIONS ALIVE; WAKES OF ANY KIND BUY TIME TO REARM AND ALLOW THE CHRISTIANS TO CONTEND THAT THEY ARE HEEDING THE ADVICE OF MEDIATORS WHO HAVE COUNSELED A CONCILIATORY ATTITUDE. (NID, DEC 8, 1975)

CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS: THE MUSLIM VIEWPOINT:

LEBANESE MUSLIM LEADERS PRESSED TO TAKE MORE RADICAL STAND:

LEBANESE MUSLIM LEADERS HAVE NOT REDUCED THEIR DEMANDS IN ANY WAY LIKELY TO ELICIT CONCESSIONS FROM THE CHRISTIANS. IN FACT, THE TRADITIONAL MUSLIM POLITICIANS--PRIME MINISTER KARAME IN TRIPOLI AND SAIB SALAM IN BEIRUT--HAVE LOST CONSIDERABLE SUPPORT TO THE MUSLIM FAR LEFT, AND ARE UNDER INCREASING PRESSURE TO MOVE TOWARD MORE RADICAL POSITIONS.

KARAMI ACTS:

DESPITE HIS APPREHENSION THAT HIS ERODING POWER BASE, AND HIS INABILITY TO COMPROMISE BASIC MUSLIM INTERESTS KARAMI OVER THE PAST FEW WEEKS HAS BEEN TAKING STEPS TOWARD A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT. HE HAS ENDURED ATTACKS FROM SEVERAL QUARTERS AFTER SAYING THAT HE AIMS ONLY TO REINTERPRET--RATHER THAN AMEND--THE NATIONAL COVENANT. IN

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ADDITION, HE HAS INDICATED THAT HE WOULD ACCEPT CHANGES LESS SWEEPING THAN THOSE PRESENTED BY THE NATIONAL DIALOGUE COMMITTEE.

KARAMI IS PRESENTLY ATTEMPTING TO ENLARGE HIS CABINET TO INCLUDE ALL MAJOR POLITICAL FACTIONS, A MOVE THAT WOULD EFFECTIVELY MORE CONSIDERATION OF POLITICAL REFORMS FROM THE DIALOGUE COMMITTEE, WHERE THE LEFTISTS ARE OVER-REPRESENTED, TO THE CABINET. THE PRIME MINISTER HAS MUCH GREATER CONTROL OVER THE CABINET THAN OVER THE COMMITTEE, AND WOULD BE ABLE TO ENSURE THAT ANY MOVE TOWARD REFORM WAS WORKED OUT BEFOREHAND BY HIMSELF AND FRANJIYAH.

LIBYAN PUPPET:

THE RELIGIOUS HEAD OF THE SUNNI MUSLIM COMMUNITY, SHEIKH HASSAN KHALEB, IS MUCH MORE INTRANSIGENT THAN ANY MAJOR MUSLIM POLITICAL LEADER. FRENCH MEDIATOR COUVE DE MURVILLE FOUND THAT, AMONG MAJOR MUSLIM LEADERS, ONLY KHALED INSISTED THAT THE MUSLIMS SECURE THE PRESIDENCY IN ANY POLITICAL SETTLEMENT OF THE LEBANESE CRISIS.

IMAN MUSA SADRA HEAD OF THE SHIA MUSLIMS, HAS PLAYED A GENERALLY CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE IN WORKING TOWARD CIVIL PEACE. ALTHOUGH HE RECEIVED SOME HELP FROM LIBYA, HE IS BACKED PRIMARILY BY THE MAJOR FETAYEEN

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GROUPS AND BY SYRIA. HIS MILITIA PLAYS ONLY A SMALL ROLE IN THE FIGHTING.

## JUMBLATT'S AMBITION:

THE SPOKESMAN FOR LEBANON'S LEFTIST GROUPS, DRUZE LEADER KAMAL JUMBLATT, IS MUCH LESS FLEXIBLE THAN THE MUSLIM POLITICIANS. FOR THE MOMENT, AT LEAST, HE IS HOLDING TO A DEMAND THAT SOME ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL REFORMS BE ENACTED BEFORE HE JOINS AN EXPANDED GOVERNMENT UNDER KARAMI.

JUMBLATT HAS BEEN PUSHED TOWARD ACCEPTING A COMPROMISE BY PALESTINIAN LEADERS AND THE SYRIANS, FROM WHOM HIS MILITIA RECEIVES ARMS AND TRAINING. HE PRESUMABLY RECEIVED THE SAME MESSAGE FROM CONSERVATIVE ARAB LEADERS DURING HIS RECENT TOUR OF GULF STATES, AND FROM SOME MODERATE LEBANESE MUSLIM POLITICIANS.

## VIEWS FROM OUTSIDE:

MANY FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS AND THE PLO ARE TRYING TO FACILITATE A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT IN LEBANON, FRANCE, AND VATICAN, EGYPT, SAUDI ARABIA, AND SEVERAL WESTERN GOVERNMENTS HAVE BREED THE WARRING PARTIES TO COMPROMISE.

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THE SYRIANS, WHILE DEEPLY INVOLVED IN THE SITUATION, HAVE GENERALLY WORKED TOWARD ENDING THE FIGHTING. ISRAEL, ANOTHER CONCERNED PARTY, SUPPORTS THE CHRISTIAN CAUSE AGAINST THE MUSLIMS, BUT FOR THE MOST PART HAS PLAYED ONLY A PERIPHERAL ROLE IN THE DISPUTE OVER LEBANON'S SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT.

ONLY LIBYA AND IRAQ ARE HEAVILY INVOLVED IN LEBANON'S DOMESTIC PROBLEMS IN WAYS THAT PERPETUATE THE FIGHTING.

SHOULD THE LEBANESE FAIL IN THEIR CURRENT EFFORTS TO FIND A POLITICAL SOLUTION AND EXTENDED HEAVY FIGHTING RESUME, THE CHANCES WILL INCREASE THAT FOREIGN POWERS --ESPECIALLY SYRIA AND ISRAEL-- WILL BE DRAWN INTO THE CONFLICT. THIS, IN TURN, COULD SPARK MODERN HOSTILITIES IN THE MIDDLE EAST. (NID, 9 DECEMBER 1975)

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